

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Patent Office for the careful attention accorded this application and respectfully requests reconsideration in view of the Amendment above and remarks set forth below.

In response the Office Action dated November 8, 2002, Applicant has canceled claim 272 without prejudice or disclaimer and has amended claims 263-271 and 273-277 in order to define more clearly over the prior art cited by the Examiner and to avoid any basis for rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112. Please note there is no pending claim 280, though such a claim is mentioned in the Office Action.

The Title of Invention has also been amended according to the Examiner's suggestion.

Applicant has reviewed carefully the cited prior art references and firmly believe that the planar laser illumination and imaging module (PLIIM) defined by the amended Claims 263-269, 271, 273, 275 and 277 is neither disclosed, taught or suggested by any of the prior art references of record, when taken alone or in combination with each other.

U.S. Patent No. 6,105,869 to Scharf et al. discloses a bar code reader which uses an array of LEDs for flooding the field of view of the electronic imager.

U.S. Patent No. 6,062,476 to Stern et al. discloses a bar code reader having an array of surface-emitting laser diodes adapted for movement to produce a laser scanning pattern.

U.S. Patent No. 5,979,769 to Munro et al. discloses a laser scanner which produces a flying spot laser beam for scanning objects.

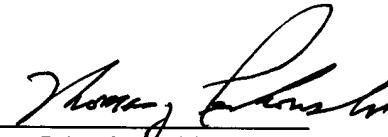
None of the prior art references disclose, teach or suggest a PLIIM-based semiconductor chip, as claimed, comprising an array of surface-emitting laser diodes arranged about a linear image detection array so as to produce a composite substantially planar laser illumination beam that is co-planar with the field of view of the linear image detection array, and in which the composite substantially planar laser illumination beam has substantially uniform power density characteristics over the spatial extent thereof, and thus the working range of the system into which the PLIIM-based chip is integrated.

In view, therefore, of the Amendment and remarks set forth above, the present invention defined by pending Claims 263-271 and 273-277 is firmly believed to be neither anticipated by, nor rendered obvious in view of the prior art of record, and that the present application is now believed to be in condition for allowance.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fee deficiencies to Deposit Account 16-1340.

Favorable action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



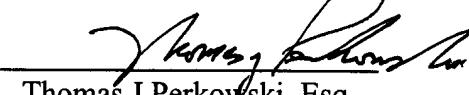
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